

<b>MICHIGAN AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMUNITY FIVE YEAR ACTION PLAN</b>	
WORKGROUP NAME:	Voucher Process Strategy Team, VP Team
DATE:	08/11/2005

<b>WORKGROUP STRATEGIC ISSUES:</b>
<p>Serve those most in need (elderly, disabled, lowest income, homeless, domestic violence) with fewer resources. Look at AMI vs. Poverty Level, budget considerations, Payment Standards (in some areas too low), FIP eligibility levels, etc.</p> <p><u>Define Problem:</u> Evaluate the current income criteria for entry into the voucher program and determine what adjustments in policy need to be made to service people "most in need".</p> <p><u>Instruments used for this evaluation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compare AMI by county to the Federal Poverty Level adjusted for family size</li> <li>• SSI and SSDI eligibility criteria</li> <li>• Current Office of Existing Housing Programs income policy</li> <li>• Survey of other programs to compare and with the objective of not excluding needy populations.</li> </ul> <p><u>Identify Constraints/Limits:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assumption that "most in need" are at or below 15% of AMI</li> <li>• If you work you are not in need</li> <li>• The program is now budget based, reducing the income level of families served will reduce the number of people served with MSHDA vouchers</li> <li>• Identifying the gaps between State agencies and their programs and services (entry income for Dept of Human Services, Habitat for Humanity, IDA's, TANF)</li> <li>• What impact can we have with other programs in streamlining intake eligibility</li> </ul>

### **Action Item #2**

Require all non-elderly and disabled participants to be enrolled in jobs or education programs (Atlanta Georgia has this requirement of all voucher holders). Seek HUD support to design a pilot CHOICE program.

#### Define Problem:

Those individuals with capacity for earned income can use the Housing Choice Voucher as a “stepping stone” to increased income and self-sufficiency by participating in opportunities available to them. Collaboration, partnering, and linking with asset building programs including Family Self-Sufficiency, Individual Development Accounts (IDA), jobs and education programs.

#### Instruments used for this evaluation:

- Identify access to job placement and training services statewide
- Determine self-sufficiency levels for urban and non-urban areas in Michigan
- Establish a time frame in which self-sufficiency is to be attained
- Promote participation in FSS and other asset-building, jobs and education programs available outside the Housing Choice Voucher program
- Housing Agent Briefings

#### Identify Constraints/Limits:

- Low wages for unskilled workers
- Literacy levels result in lengthy training needs
- Ability to become self-sufficient is impacted by more than income & education
- Lack of support systems to succeed
- High unemployment in some areas
- Federal regulations against work/training requirement
- Capacity to case manage participants
- Budget constraints

### **Action Item #3**

Expand the Homeless Preference Pilot statewide over the next five years.

#### Define Problem:

Not all current Continuum of Care Bodies in Michigan are strong enough to participate in this pilot.

What makes a strong Continuum of Care?

#### Constraints/Limits:

- The varying capacity of each CoC and services available in their respective service areas.
- Ability and resources to provide technical assistance to each CoC who wish to develop their capacity to a level where they could participate in the future
- Interest of CoCs to participate in Homeless Preference Pilot
- Size of waiting list
- Definition of homeless when qualifying for the Homeless Preference Pilot: include transitional housing and first six months of permanent housing – HUD allows both to be considered homeless in the definition

#### **Action Item #4**

Education of landlords regarding HQS, lead-based paint, program objectives and accountability.

##### Define Problem:

Landlords participating in the Section 8 Program need to be better educated on lead-based paint regulations and abatement procedures, as well as Section 8 Program objectives, and their accountability as a Section 8 landlord. Can some form of uniform education be offered for landlords on these issues?

##### Instruments:

- Mailings
- Contact the Dept of Community Health for lead paint training information and resources
- Local level landlord briefings, in conjunction with the city, to explain rules and regulations of the program, mandatory
- Best practices of others
- Forum with other PHA's – they are under the same requirements, so let's do this together
- Videos of tenant and landlord briefings from HUD – we can ask
- Incentives for participation – preferred placement on a landlord listing, resources to correct deficiencies (i.e. grant dollars), criminal penalties related to legislation for landlords, environmental education and impacts on children
- Include Fair Housing education

Update: A Landlord Briefing is being designed and implemented by OEH Detroit.

##### Constraints/Limits:

- Availability and limitation of resources
- Cooperation of landlords in utilizing education efforts

#### **Action Item #5**

Technology, Housing Locator, Handheld, Paperless

##### Define Problem:

There is an apparent lack of funding to make necessary changes in software, hardware, and training. People fear change. When funding is spent on technological change, government agencies hold onto the old policies and practices.

##### Constraints/Limitations:

- Availability and limitation of resources

**Future Action Items to follow-up on:**

1. Renter Education
  - How to be a good renter
  - Credit education
  - How to find a good, affordable housing unit
  - Understanding rent rates
2. Forum with other PHA's
  - We all must comply with the same regulation, so why not offer combined trainings and resources locally?
3. Single Point of Entry at the local and state level for programs and services, or specifically for Housing Choice Voucher assistance wait list.
  - Limitation due to Michigan's large, geographic territory, and program size
4. Education of Public
  - Impact of budget cuts
  - NIMBYism
  - Fair Housing
  - Deconcentration
  - Renter education
  - Integration of varying economic, societal populations